

**Owensboro, Kentucky
Tuesday, October 21, 2002**

Approximately 16-18 people participated in the Owensboro forum, most of whom were local artists or teachers. A food table was set up with coffee and water, but only one dessert arrived late via a volunteer and there was little evidence of local support to organize the forum. There were only KAC-provided materials and no local displays. There was newspaper coverage the following day.

The group chose three KAC goals for small group sessions. A summary of key discussion points:

Goal # 2: Efficient statewide delivery of arts programs and services

- The community needs KAC support to reinforce/teach the skills of local coalition building. This could include, for example, providing models for a center which would coordinate all types of arts (could be the site of progressive art education for the community where local artists would be a key resource).
- KAC grants are available but we need KAC to facilitate processes by which people are more aware of them and can better take advantage of them.
- We need to better promote local artists and their work in the community (and artists want to do their part to help accomplish this goal).

Goal # 3: Artists live and work in a supportive environment.

- The community needs permanent professional display facilities for local artists, a working studio which would provide demonstrations for the public, make art more accessible, and help people discover their hidden talents.
- Artists need KAC programs/support to develop their marketing skills – and help creating markets for their products.
- Arts need more interaction with schools and better communication from and interaction with KAC.
- KAC staff needs to be more locally visible in efforts to better understand the needs of the local artists.

Goal # 5: Public policy is favorable to the arts.

- There needs to be more effective advocacy for KAC funding, public school programs which increase student exposure to arts venues, and new opportunities for educators to experience the arts. Such an effort should target per capita art funding at twice its current level.
- State educational testing programs should consider separate recognition for art/humanities apart from general scores.
- The state Department of Education should publicly acknowledge/recognize schools for strengths in arts disciplines. (Note: right brain development ends at primary level.)
- There should be an emphasis on integrating the arts throughout the curriculum.
- The public must better understand support shifts for community arts organizations.
- Coalitions of arts organizations and arts supporters should organize public forums for candidates to hear the case for arts support and the impact of diminishing resources.

(There is a general need for coalition building – and the development of specific skills needed to bring organizations and individuals together. How can KAC support?)

Twelve to sixteen people remained to discuss the four KLTPRC survey issues and links with KAC goals. Their key points:

Safe and caring communities:

- Arts programs are critically important for at-risk populations.
- Communities increase awareness/acceptance of diversity through different cultural art forums and exposure. KAC should capitalize on existing models and programs (publicizing “best practices”) which bring people together at the local community level.

Responsibility for family success

- Arts improve self esteem, the capacity for divergent thinking, and creative problem solving skills – all important parts of a family support system.
- Arts organizations should be encouraged to produce family-oriented programs which attract family units to arts programs and include parent/child activities.
- Communities should be encouraged to use arts education in pre- and after- school programs.

Accessible, quality health care

- Arts programs provide alternatives to drug use, body, mind
- Art's healing properties are both physically and mentally therapeutic.
Note: this was a touchy subject for artists who don't have health care

Excellent system of life-long learning

- We must do a better job of connecting art (in every form) to everyday existence.

Other comments:

We need arts council staff here more often, to come and see us in action!